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DE RUEHJA #0085 0151100
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O 151100Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7645
INFO RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHJS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4637
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1872
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1409
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 2237
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS JAKARTA 000085

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS
NSC FOR E.PHU

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: SUHARTO CLINGS TO LIFE, LEGAL DEBATE ENSUES

REF: A. JAKARTA 33

[1](#)B. 07 JAKARTA 2974

[1](#)1. (U) This message is Sensitive but Unclassified -- Please handle accordingly.

[1](#)2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Former Indonesian President Suharto remains in critical condition eleven days after entering the hospital on January 5. Media coverage remains intensive, and a limited but growing number of domestic and foreign dignitaries have come to his bedside. Suharto's supporters called for dropping an outstanding civil suit against the former dictator. While the government has demurred publicly, prosecutors reportedly have offered an out-of-court settlement. END SUMMARY

[1](#)3. (U) 50-50 CHANCE: Suharto remains in critical but stable condition after 11 days in the hospital. Media reports that, according to doctors, he experienced multiple organ failures on January 11-12, has suffered a repeated buildup of fluid at various points in the body and now has a lung infection. He remains dependent on life support, and one doctor described the octogenarian chances of pulling through as 50-50. Various rumors have circulated as to why Suharto lingers on, including a purported Javanese belief that it is bad luck to die in January and alleged Suharto family machinations to have outstanding legal cases against him dropped.

[1](#)4. (U) VIP VISITS PICK UP: Media coverage remains constant, and numerous Indonesian leaders, including President Yudhoyono, VP Kalla, Speaker of Parliament Agung Laksono and high-ranking military officers, have visited him. International visitors included former Singapore PM Lee Kwan Yew, former Malaysian PM Mahathir Mohamad and Brunei Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. Lee Kwan Yew, the first to visit, expressed dismay that Suharto was not being shown the respect due a leader of his time.

[1](#)5. (SBU) LAWSUIT GOES ON, BUT TACTICS CHANGE: The former president's illness sparked a vigorous debate regarding the ongoing multi-million-dollar civil lawsuit that the Attorney General's Office has filed against Suharto and the Supersemar Foundation. Supporters, notably from Golkar Party, have appealed for the GOI to drop the case against the Supersemar foundation, which Suharto established (ref b). The Attorney General responded that the case would proceed, while

President Yudhoyono deemed the debate inappropriate under the circumstances. In what could be a move to resolve the issue, prosecutors reportedly offered the foundation an out-of-court settlement last week. If accepted, the settlement offer could represent a face-saving way out of the controversy for both sides.

HUME